



Gallatin City-County Health Department

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NEWS FROM THE MONTANA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

MBCHP Sets Record for Number of Breast Screenings

The Montana Breast and Cervical Health Program (MBCHP) enrolled nearly 5,000 Montana women into the program this past year – the most ever for a one year period in the program's 12-year history.

A total of 4,823 Montana women from July 1, 2007 to June 30, 2008 received a mammogram and/or a Pap test utilizing the program's services.

By comparison, 4,537 women were enrolled into the program in 2006-07 and 3,755 participated in 2005-06.

The MBCHP of the Department of Public Health and Human Services offers free or low-cost breast and cervical screenings for the early detection of breast and cervical cancer by providing mammograms, clinical breast exams, Pap tests and pelvic exams.

"We keep setting our goals higher every year," MBCHP health education specialist Diane Arave said. "I'm thankful we're reaching so many Montana women for these screenings that do save lives."

Program staff set a goal of enrolling 6,300 women, including 1,243 American Indian women, into the program by June 30 of next year. "As time goes on we hope the need for breast cancer screenings goes down," Arave mentioned. "But for now, that simply isn't the case."

Since 1996, the program has provided a total of 23,880 mammograms and 17,291 Pap tests to Montana women. Of those, 379 breast cancers and 286 pre-cervical cancers were found. "Obviously, the need for these screenings is high and we'll continue to reach out to Montana women," Arave stressed.

The MBCHP provides screenings to women who have no insurance or who are underinsured and meet specific age and income guidelines. The program is also available to American Indian women who receive services through Indian Health Services or go to Urban Indian Centers in Montana.

These services are available statewide in all 56 Montana counties.

Arave says recent survey information from participating clients has been heartwarming. "Some clients have said with increased health care costs, fuel costs and living expenses that it has been a great relief to be able to continue their check ups," she said. "The clients have also been pleased being treated with dignity and respect regardless of their ability to pay and that they receive their results back in a timely manner."

The MBCHP is federally funded by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and receives some financial support from several contracted community-based sites throughout the state and the Susan G. Komen for the Cure.

The mission of the MBCHP is to reduce breast and cervical cancer deaths among Montana women by providing ongoing quality screening services and education in a manner that is appropriate, accessible, cost effective and sensitive to women's needs.

For more information about the Montana Breast and Cervical Program call Arave at 406-444-0927 (toll free 1-888-803-9343), or locally 406-582-3107.

Or, for information on other DPHHS cancer prevention and control programs go to the DPHHS Cancer Control Section Web site at www.cancer.mt.gov

RELATED INFORMATION

On Sept. 5, 2008 the three major television networks, CBS, ABC, and NBC, will collaborate to air one commercial-free, primetime hour dedicated to an interactive, national telethon aimed at increasing cancer awareness and raising funding to support life-saving research. The television special called 'Stand Up to Cancer' will be hosted by evening news anchors Katie Couric, Charles Gibson, and Brian Williams.

The telethon will feature segments inclusive of cutting-edge cancer therapies. More information on this event can be found at www.standup2cancer.org.

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